

Supervisor Molina Looks Back on Year as Chair



During my tenure as Chair of the Board of Supervisors, we enjoyed a key difference from years past: a rosier fiscal forecast. We chose to invest much of our revenue increase in the Department of Health Services (DHS) so as to diminish our ongoing healthcare budget deficit. We also opted to allocate monies toward one-time capital expenditures and enhancements to unincorporated services.

This is not to say that we did not face our share of challenges this year. For instance, the Board of Supervisors worked intensely to improve operations at the Martin Luther King, Jr./Charles M. Drew Medical Center. We invested considerable energies into recruiting more deputies into the Sheriff's Department. As always, we struggled to keep our public healthcare system solvent while the number of uninsured people in the County of Los Angeles continued to grow. However, our healthier financial situation allowed us to allocate additional revenue to public health, safety, housing, parks, and libraries. I am also proud to report that we gave our In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) workers a long overdue raise.

Los Angeles County's fiscal picture brightened due to a combination of several factors. First, a hot real estate market translated into higher County property tax revenues. Second, prudent budget planning during rougher fiscal years kept the County on solid financial footing. (Many thanks to Chief Administrative Officer, David E. Janssen for his wise direction in this regard.) Lastly, voters statewide approved a ballot initiative preventing County coffers from being used to balance the State of California's own budget. All of this meant that, for the first time in a long time, we had extra funding to enhance all kinds of services for residents.

For instance, the Sheriff's Department received over \$13 million—on top of its standard departmental budget—specifically to increase patrol in unincorporated areas. We also allocated an extra \$9 million for the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program. These funds will improve public safety in a way that produces tangible results.

The Board of Supervisors also set aside \$20 million to construct emergency shelters for homeless families. In addition, we set the groundwork for a Housing Trust Fund that we hope will augment affordable housing opportunities.

Parks and libraries also fared well this year. The First District alone received \$28.86 million in one-time funds which—among other things—will go toward an

expanded Sorensen Library; a new park in Avocado Heights; more pocket parks in urban areas; a bike route system connected to the larger Los Angeles River refurbishment project; additional soccer fields; and construction of water play areas known as “splash pads.”

Lastly, the Board of Supervisors added \$125 million in ongoing funds into DHS' budget. Los Angeles County also successfully negotiated a waiver with the federal government generating more than \$450 million for DHS over the next five years. Both of these measures will go a long way toward keeping our public healthcare system afloat. Back in 1995 and again in 2002, Los Angeles County came dangerously close to making serious cutbacks to DHS. One of my top priorities is to ensure that we do everything possible to avoid heading down this path again. Based on our current calculations, we still face an \$890 million DHS budgetary shortfall by Fiscal Year 2008-2009. Clearly, keeping DHS' public healthcare network solvent will remain an ongoing challenge for us in the years to come.

HIGHLIGHTS

Volume 37 Issue 12

Antonovich Promotes Spirit of the Season.....	3
Retirees/Employee of the Month.....	4
Burke Looks Forward to Busy Holiday Season.....	5
ENRICHING LIVES.....	6-7
Holiday Tips: Safety Tips from Health Services..	8-9
Antonovich Commemorates Air Rescue 5.....	10
Knabe Declares National Family Caregiver Month...	11
Yaroslavsky Helps Kick Off Y!MBY.....	11



EVENT CALENDAR

Please join Mayor Michael D. Antonovich at the Antelope Valley Career Fair to benefit foster youth 18 years and older and the community at large.

Friday, January 20 – 9 a.m. to noon

Poppy Pavilion – Antelope Valley Fairgrounds
2551 West Avenue H, Lancaster 93536

Los Angeles County Arboretum & Botanic Garden

301 N. Baldwin Avenue, Arcadia 91007

For a list of seminars, workshops and classes, please visit www.arboretum.org or call

(626) 821-4623

Jan 14-15 – College & Career Fair

Jan 21-22 – Baiko-En Bonsai Kenkyukai Show and Sale

Los Angeles County Museum of Art

5905 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles 90036

(323) 857-6000

www.lacma.org

Through January 15 - The Pharaoh's World (Boone Children's Gallery, LACMA West)

Through January 16 - Pioneering Modern Painting: Cézanne and Pissarro 1865-1885

Through February 12 - Contemporary Project 9: Gajin Fujita and Pablo Vargas Lugo

Music Center

135 N. Grand Ave., Los Angeles 90012

(213) 972-7211

www.musiccenter.org

Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

Jan 21 - Feb 16 – Giacomo Puccini's "Madama Butterfly"

Kirk Douglas Theatre

601 West Temple Street, Los Angeles 90012

Jan 8 - Feb 12 – Permanent Collection

Mark Taper Forum

Through Jan 22 – "Lewis and Clark Reach the Euphrates"

Walt Disney Concert Hall

151 S. Grand Ave., Los Angeles 90012

JANUARY

5-8 - Mehta conducts Bruckner

10 - Chamber: Lang Lang

12-15 - Lang Lang plays Bartok

14 - Gardiner conducts Mozart (8 p.m.)

15 - Organ Recital: Diane Meredith Belchner (7:30 p.m.)

17 - Green Umbrella: poetry

20 - First Nights: Shostakovich

21-22 - Hilary Hahn plays Sibelius

Marina del Rey Celebrates New Year's Eve With Fireworks Spectacular

On New Year's Eve, December 31, the skies over Marina del Rey lit up with a brilliant display of fireworks, beginning 30 seconds before midnight and continuing into the opening minutes of 2006.



The fireworks, shot off the south jetty, were presented by Zambelli Fireworks Internationale, which originated more than 100 years ago in Italy. The famous fireworks were viewed throughout the Marina. However, the best locations for viewing were Burton Chace Park, 13650 Mindanao Way, and Fisherman's Village, 13755 Fiji Way.

The Zambelli Fireworks New Year's Eve Spectacular was presented by Supervisor Don Knabe, Fourth District, and the Department of Beaches and Harbors.



County DIGEST

Articles and other submissions to the *County DIGEST* may be edited or otherwise altered for clarity.

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1-800-87-FRAUD

Tips for Keeping Pets Safe This Holiday Season

The holiday season, a time filled with joy for many people, poses some risks for pets. Here are a few tips from the Department of Animal Care and Control to keep you and your pets safe during the holidays:

- Never feed or let pets eat chocolate or other candies. Chocolate is poisonous to dogs and cats and can cause vomiting, diarrhea, and even death. If you suspect your pet has eaten chocolate, get him or her to a veterinarian right away for treatment.
- Shiny ornaments on Christmas trees can be particularly attractive to curious pets. Dogs and cats can suffer serious and even fatal injuries by chewing and swallowing pieces of tree ornaments. Make sure your pets cannot reach any ornaments in your home.
- Many people add special liquid preservatives to the water in Christmas tree stands. Some of these products are harmful to pets that might take a drink from the water. Be sure to ask if a Christmas tree preservative is “pet safe” before you buy it.
- Keep holiday seasonal plants and flowers away from your pets. Many plants, such as Poinsettias, Christmas candles, English Holly, Christmas Berry, Christmas Rose and Mistletoe are poisonous to dogs and cats.
- Gift-wrappings can also pose risks to dogs and cats. Your pets may be tempted to chew on wrapping paper or ribbon, and these can be very harmful if swallowed. Also, do not let your pets play in or around trash bags used to discard holiday wrappings.
- Electrical wiring can prove tempting for cats to play with and dogs to chew on. Your pet can suffer a severe shock or become electrocuted by coming into contact with the electrical current in the line. Make sure your pets cannot reach or climb onto areas that put wiring in their reach.
- Turkey is a particular favorite during the holiday season, but the bones easily splinter and should not be given to pets. Bone splinters can puncture an animal’s gastrointestinal tract, causing serious internal injury, which could result in death.
- Keep your pets away from alcoholic drinks. The holiday season traditionally features a wide variety of specialty drinks such as eggnog. These are not good for family pets. Do not let anyone offer a “sample” of their favorite libation to your pet.
- Remember your pet during the holiday season. Be sure to pick out a new tag or other present for your pet. It makes them feel like part of the family, includes them in the festivities and gives them something to do while family members are opening presents. Pet stores feature a wide variety of toys that are specially designed for your dogs and cat.

The Department of Animal Care and Control wishes you and your pets a safe and happy holiday season!

Supervisor Antonovich Promotes Spirit of the Season with Holiday Toy Express & “Spark of Love” Toy Drive

On Saturday, November 19, Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich helped kick off the opening night of Metrolink’s Holiday Toy Express – a commuter train decorated with tens of thousands of twinkling lights, tinsel, and animated decorations, delivering a Christmas music show to kids and families at stations throughout the County of Los Angeles.



This year marks Metrolink’s 13th anniversary and the 13th year of the “Spark of Love” toy drive, the only toy collection charity of its kind operated entirely by firefighters. The Holiday Toy Express toy collection for “Spark of Love” accounts for one third of the yearly totals of toys that firefighters distribute to children in our communities.

Created in 1992 and covering six counties, the Southern California Regional Rail Authority’s Metrolink commuter railroad runs 137 trains each weekday – operating more than 512 total miles over seven routes. Twelve years ago, there were 2,000 passenger trips each weekday – today, there are more than 36,000, positively impacting Southern California’s freeways and highways.

RETIREES

Congratulations to the following employees who are joining the ranks of the retired after 30 or more years of service to the people of the County of Los Angeles:

CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES:

Brenda J. Gardner, Emiliano M. Laroza, Sanny S. Yeung

CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES:

Stafford W. Dilqule, Julius Gabay, Joyce H. Hunt, Jane M. Nishio

COMMUNITY & SENIOR SERVICES:

Paulette D. Randolph

COUNTY COUNSEL:

Kenneth E. Reynolds

DISTRICT ATTORNEY:

Frank Lukus

FIRE:

Steve M. Floyd

INTERNAL SERVICES:

Rudolph A. Zamora

MENTAL HEALTH:

Selma M. Washington

PUBLIC DEFENDER:

Barbara Metcalf

PUBLIC LIBRARY:

Joan V. Powell

PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES:

William R. Castillo, Claudia Chapel, Cynthia Hilliard, Irene Hutson, Glenn R. Jordan, Mary F. Lorden, Velma M. Lorio, Alice Martin, Johnny C. Ross

SHERIFF:

Michael D. Fry, Frank W. McGuire, Terry L. Samuel

SUPERIOR COURT:

Carol McNeil

CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES:

Emelina R. Holmes

FIRE:

William C. Masten

MENTAL HEALTH:

Pamela L. Davis, Xuan L. Ha, Geneva O'Keith

PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES:

Vera W. Caldwell, Bun H. Ny

SHERIFF:

Bobby J. Gibbs, Deanna R. Hurwitz, Patricia Lewis, Theodora T. Martin, Susan W. Ngo, Dennis C. Ransom

Congratulations to the following employees who are joining the ranks of the retired after 25 or more years of service to the people of the County of Los Angeles:

Employee of the Month: Chief Administrative Office's Loren Clapp

"You read a lot of things that Loren has done for the County but the quality of the individual does not come across on paper," said Chief Administrative Officer David E. Janssen of his employee Loren Clapp, the recipient of the November 2005 Employee of the Month. He received his scroll from Supervisor Gloria Molina, then Chair of the Board of Supervisors, in the presence of family and co-workers.



Clapp, an 18-year employee of the County of Los Angeles, is currently an Assistant Graphic Arts Coordinator assigned to the Graphic Arts Section of the Public Affairs Office. He is responsible for designing publications, souvenir program books, newsletters, invitations, flyers, logos, slides and exhibits for the Board of Supervisors, County departments and commissions. He also assumes a managerial role in the absence of the coordinator, trouble-shoots Mac-related computer problems and gives advice in solving graphic design problems within the Graphic Arts Section. However, as he said, "the bulk of my work is still as a graphic artist, translating the client's wishes into visual form." And he does.

Among his proudest achievement is the award-winning exhibit he produced this summer for the California State and Los Angeles County Fair which garnered a gold medal. Mr. Clapp also had the opportunity to help redesign, in collaboration with the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), the County seal that had originally been drawn when he was a child by a family friend, Milard Sheets, for the late Supervisor Kenneth Hahn. "I was honored to be part of that effort and took seriously the need to maintain the basic design of the original," Clapp said.

He finds most fulfilling seeing colorful, straightforward and easily accessible designs brought to print. And thus, his work in both brochure and logo design for the Toy Loan program brought tremendous joy and pride after seeing it being utilized just south of downtown Los Angeles. "It was so rewarding to think that my work had become a part of helping underprivileged children," he added.

Continuing in his effort to make a difference in children's lives, Mr. Clapp has volunteered many times throughout the year for the past 10 years teaching art classes at his former middle school, Magruder Middle School, in Torrance. He continually sharpens his skills by participating regularly in two different drawing/painting workshops at Angel's Gate Art Center in San Pedro and in monthly drawing/painting marathons at El Camino Community College.

His proficiency is not only in graphic arts but also in singing. Mr. Clapp was a member of the Long Beach Chapter of the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barbershop Quartet Singing in America. For his involvement and talent, he received the "Barbershopper of the Year" award.

EOM

continued on page 5

Supervisor Burke Looks Forward to Busy Holiday Season

When Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke released her holiday events calendar, she said she was looking forward to her upcoming holiday season parties and giveaways for constituents. "This is a special time of the year for everybody," she said "I find it's every bit as rewarding for me to give as it is for those who receive toys, food and other gifts."

The holiday calendar for special events in the Second District is as follows:

December 17

- 10 a.m.-3 p.m. - Holiday Toy Giveaway, Jesse Owens Park
- 11 a.m. - Christmas in the Park, Victoria Park
- 3 p.m. - Holiday Toy Giveaway, Ted Watkins Park

December 19

- 11 a.m.-3 p.m. - Senior Christmas Dinner, Victoria Park

December 22

- 11 a.m.-2 p.m. - Co-hosting with Mattel Corp. a party for children of incarcerated parents at Burke Roche Point in Kenneth Hahn Park
- Annual Party at the Bridge Theater with Channel 7

December 23

- 11 a.m.-4 p.m. - Food and Toy Giveaway, Athens Park
- 12 p.m.-2 p.m. - Burke's Club Christmas Party, Washington Park
- 4 p.m.-8 p.m. - Christmas Celebration, Enterprise Park
- 6 p.m.-8 p.m. - Christmas Program, Helen Keller Park

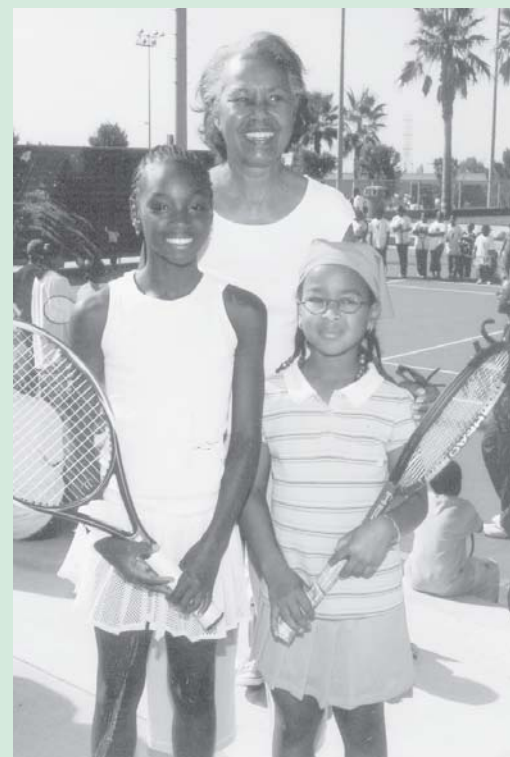
December 24

- 11 a.m.-5 p.m. - Christmas Community Dinner, Bethune Park
- 12 p.m.-2 p.m. - Holiday Toy Giveaway, Mona Park
- 1 p.m.-5 p.m. - Christmas Toy Giveaway, Bodger Park

January 6, 2006

- 1 p.m.-5 p.m. - Los Reyes Magos - The Three Wise Men, Lennox Park

Supervisor Burke took time with two young participants at her first annual tennis event on November 5. The event, to promote tennis in the Second District, drew more than 800 young people, 4-17 years old, at the Home Depot center in the City of Carson, and was the first community event leading into the holiday season. Each child was presented with a tennis racquet.



EOM

continued from page 4

Mr. Clapp obtained a Master of Fine Arts from the Pratt Institute in New York City and a Bachelor of Arts in painting, sculpture and graphic arts from the University of California at Los Angeles. Widowed in 1997, he remarried in 2003 to his two children's middle school history teacher who has four children of her own. They call Torrance home.

For his creativity and dedication to the County of Los Angeles and for being conscientious, upbeat and possessing a can-do attitude in service of others, congratulations Loren Clapp on a well-deserved honor!

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective And Caring Service"

ENRICHING LIVES...

County Employees Demonstrate Holiday Spirit

Mental Health Brightens Holidays for Homeless Children

The Homeless CalWORKs Family Project (HCFP) is a collaborative effort between the Department of Mental Health, the Department of Public Social Services and the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority. There are six Board approved Countywide projects designed to assist homeless families with mental health issues in finding stabilized housing. Downtown Mental Health Center (DMHC) is our only directly operated project site due to its location in the Skid Row area. CalWORKs mental health and housing services are provided to over 100 homeless families. These families collectively have approximately 240 homeless children involved in the HCFP.

DMHC scheduled its fourth annual holiday party for homeless families and children on December 21. It was a fun-filled event with food, face painting, a Santa and gifts for the families. Staff from this collaborative partnership, were also available to answer any questions. In an effort to assist DMHC, the CalWORKs Program's administrative staff hosted a special fundraising event on December 5, 6 & 7. All donations/contributions were directly given to DMHC to provide gifts to these homeless families.

We thank you for your support this holiday season.



DMH CalWORKs staff accepting donations to help homeless children on Skid Row in Downtown Los Angeles.

County Departments and SEIU Local 660 Team Up for Holiday Toy Drive

Every year, hundreds of children in the County of Los Angeles foster care system spend Christmas away from their parents and family. Most are legally available for adoption or have lost a parent due to death, but have not yet found a loving home. They often have no personal belongings.

The 25th annual Holiday Toy Drive, founded by Alexa Medlin, has become a tradition with Local 660 staff and membership. Medlin, a staff director at SEIU Local 660, was a former MacLaren resident and foster child.

This year, \$3,000 was donated to the toy drive, as well as hundreds of gifts through toy drive Captains at the Assessor's Office, Department of Public Social Services, Department of Public Works, Community and Senior Services, Probation Department and Internal Services Department. The Department of Animal Care and Control helped collect both



toys and cash donations. In addition to the toy donations made to the Department of Children and Family Services, a Christmas party is held every year. This year, the celebration was held on December 16 in the SEIU Local 660 auditorium

for 100 children and caregivers. Each child was given gifts, had a picture taken with Santa Claus, played games and made beaded crafts. Each participant also received a portrait by caricature artists. As these events were going on, a disc jockey played holiday music. Special thanks to Annelle Grajeda, SEIU Local 660 General Manager, Bryce Yokomizo, Director of the Department of Public Social Services, and Assessor Rick Auerbach for their attendance at the holiday party.



Since 1997, the Department of Public Works has partnered with SEIU Local 660 in this annual undertaking. Donation bins are set up at five different Public Works locations throughout the County, allowing both headquarters and field employees to donate unwrapped gifts to needy children, many of whom are without their family during the holidays for the first time. Through the generosity of Public Works employees, more than 200 toys are donated each year. (see photos)

SEIU Local 660 and County of Los Angeles employees continue to recognize the great need for gift donations and reach out to put a smile on the face of children who have very little.

Internal Services Supports Toy Loan Program

Approximately 140 managers from the Internal Services Department (ISD) brought their holiday spirit to work by supporting the Department of Public Social Services' (DPSS) Toy Loan Program. Stuffed animals, books, games, dolls, cars and many other toys and gifts were collected for the program to provide for children and disadvantaged families during the holiday season. Children borrow toys from a Toy Loan Center in the same manner in which they borrow books from a public library. There are dozens of Toy Loan Centers throughout the County and ISD has generously participated in this program for several years.

Other groups within ISD raised money by hosting holiday boutiques and will donate proceeds to the five County-sponsored Charitable Giving Foundations. Employees also generously donated gift certificates from a variety of retail and food stores to foster teen youths and the Spark of Love foundation.



County of Los Angeles VISION

Our *purpose* is to improve the quality of life in Los Angeles County by providing responsive, efficient and high quality public services that promote the self-sufficiency, well-being and prosperity of individuals, families, businesses and communities.

Our *philosophy* of teamwork and collaboration is anchored in our *shared values*:

- **A can-do attitude** - we approach each challenge believing that, together, a solution can be achieved.
- **Accountability** - we accept responsibility for the decisions we make and the actions we take.
- **Compassion** - we treat those we serve and each other with kind and caring manner.
- **Commitment** - we always go the extra mile to achieve our mission.
- **Integrity** - we act consistent with our values.
- **Professionalism** - we perform to a high standard of excellence.
- **Respect for diversity** - we value the uniqueness of every individual and their perspective.
- **Responsiveness** - we take the action needed in a timely manner.

Our *position* as the premier organization for those working in the public interest is established by:

- a capability to undertake programs that have public value;
- an aspiration to be recognized through our achievements as the model for civic innovation; and a pledge to always work to earn the public trust.



HOLIDAY TIPS

Holiday Safety Tips from the Department of Health Services

The holidays are an exciting time of year for children and adults. However, preventable injury-related hospitalizations and deaths during this time of year are not uncommon. The Consumer Product Safety Commission reports that 110,000 children under 15 years of age are treated in emergency departments for toy-related injuries each year in the U.S. Half of these injuries were among children younger than 5 years of age. The United States Fire Administration reports that every year household fires occurring during the holiday season injure 2,600 individuals and cause over \$930 million in damage. In 2002, the Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reported 4,943 traffic deaths in the U.S. between Thanksgiving and New Years; 41.5% of these involved alcohol. Traffic related injuries during this same time period resulted in more than 43,000 hospital emergency department visits.

The Injury and Violence Prevention Program recommends the following tips for a safe holiday season.

Child-Safe Gift Buying

To ensure a safe, happy and exciting holiday season keep these age-appropriate safety guidelines in mind when choosing gifts for children. It is okay to tell a child that a certain toy is unsafe for them.

Infant to 3-years of age

- Avoid toys with small removable parts. These are a choking hazard
- Children under 4 years can choke on parts with a diameter of $1\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch or less
- Look for sturdy construction on potential small parts
- Toys with strings, straps, or cords longer than 7 inches are a strangulation hazard

- Balloons are not recommended for children in this age group

GIFT IDEAS:

- For infants: soft dolls, stuffed animals without buttons or small attachments, or cloth covered books
- For ages 1-3 years: books, blocks, shape toys, or balls larger than $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches are recommended

Ages 4-8

- It is recommended that you DO NOT buy electric toys for this age group as they are a potential burn hazard

GIFT IDEAS:

- Children in this age group are physically active and creative. Good gifts include non-toxic arts and craft supplies, books, musical instruments, and outdoor toys
- Remember the importance of physical activity as this age group approaches puberty and may be drawn to sedentary video games. While some children may enjoy physical activity, others may need more encouragement so sports equipment is an appropriate gift. Remember: NEVER give a bicycle, scooter, skateboard, roller blades/skates, as a gift without providing a helmet and other appropriate protective gear!

Ages 8 and Older

- Electrical trains and battery operated toys are okay for this group, but...
- Never allow a child to change the batteries
- Always check for loose wires

GIFT IDEAS:

- Remember the importance of physical activity as this age group approaches puberty and may be drawn to sedentary video games. While some children may enjoy physical activity, others may need more encouragement so sports equipment is an appropriate gift.

Remember: NEVER give a bicycle, scooter, skateboard, roller blades/skates, as a gift without providing a helmet and other appropriate protective gear!

All Ages

- Always read labels for age recommendations
- Always read instructions to show your child how to properly use any new toy
- Propelled toys such as darts are not recommended for children of any age
- Avoid toys with lead-based paint
- Toy guns, pellet, and BB guns should be avoided as gift options
- Avoid toys that produce loud noises as they can impair a child's hearing
- Immediately discard plastic wrappings which can lead to suffocation among small children
- Avoid buying toys with sharp points or edges

Holiday Decorating Safety Tips

Holiday Trees

- When purchasing an artificial tree, look for a "Fire Resistant" label
- When purchasing a live tree, check for freshness. Keep the stand filled with water so it does not dry out and become a fire hazard
- Never leave tree lights lit on a live tree when you are not at home
- Always place your Christmas tree away from fireplaces, radiators, or portable heaters
- Be sure that your tree is mounted on a sturdy base and placed out of the way of traffic to ensure that children cannot pull it over onto themselves
- Only use flame-resistant or non-combustible materials to trim a tree
- Never use lighted candles on trees



HOLIDAY TIPS

- Choose tinsel or artificial icicles made of non-leaded material
- With small children, avoid decorations that are sharp or breakable, keep trimmings with small removable parts out of their reach to avoid them swallowing small pieces, and avoid trimmings that resemble candy or food
- Follow container directions carefully to avoid lung irritation while decorating with artificial snow sprays
- Avoid placing small or breakable ornaments on lower branches where small children can reach them

Fireplaces

- Use care with “fire salts,” which produce colored flames when thrown on wood fires. They contain heavy metals that can cause intense gastrointestinal irritation and vomiting if eaten. Keep them away from children
- Do not burn wrapping papers in the fireplace. A flash fire may result as wrappings ignite suddenly and burn intensely

Holiday Lighting

- Always use indoor lights indoors and outdoor lights outdoors
- Before using lights outdoors, check labels to be sure they have been certified for outdoor use
- Check for broken or cracked sockets, frayed or bare wires, and loose connections. Throw out damaged sets
- Use no more than three standard-sized strings of lights per single extension cord
- Never use electric lights on a metallic tree; they can become charged with electricity from the lights and can result in an electrical shock if touched
- Stay away from power or feeder

lines leading from utility poles into older homes

- Fasten outdoor lights securely to trees, house walls, or other firm supports to protect the lights from wind damage. Use only insulated staples to hold strings in place, not nails or tacks. Or, run strings of lights through hooks (available at hardware stores.)
- Use caution when removing outdoor holiday lights. Never pull or tug on lights - they may unravel and inadvertently wrap around power lines
- Outdoor electric lights and decorations should be plugged into circuits protected by ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs). Portable outdoor GFCIs can be purchased where electrical supplies are sold. GFCIs can be installed permanently to household circuits by a qualified electrician
- When you leave home and before you go to bed, be sure to turn off all holiday lights

Cooking Safely with Children

Parents and caregivers must remember that every child is different and can be at different developmental levels and abilities, so it is important to take this into consideration before assigning holiday cooking help. Children 10-years of age and younger generally do not understand danger and risk of injury in the kitchen and therefore should not use the stove, electrical appliances, sharp utensils or handle hot dishes from the oven. Younger children can help in the kitchen by washing vegetables and fruits, or mixing foods that don't require sharp knives, appliances or hot temperatures.

5-9 Years

- Stir ingredients together in a bowl
- Rinse foods under cold water
- Use a cookie cutter to cut out shapes in dough

- Use a butter knife or plastic knife to spread peanut butter, or slice soft cheese (9 years of age or older)

10-11 Years of Age

- Squeeze garlic from a garlic press
- Use electrical kitchen appliances such as a blender, food processor, electric mixer, microwave or toaster oven

12-Years of Age and Older

- Chop or slice with a paring knife
- Use the stovetop to turn burners on and off and select oven temperature
- Flip pancakes on a hot griddle
- Place a tray of cookies in the oven
- Peel vegetables
- Use an electric can opener
- Shred cheese with a hand grater

Children over age 14 can take on more responsibility in the kitchen and can handle tasks such as:

- Operating the stovetop without adult supervision
- Draining cooked spaghetti into a colander
- Removing a tray of cookies from the oven

Holiday Driving Safety

During the holidays, traffic increases considerably with people traveling to visit family, shop, and celebrate. It is also a popular time for people to socialize with alcohol, increasing the number of irresponsible drivers.

On the Road

- Wear a safety belt at all times
- Always place children in age appropriate restraints
- Place all children less than 12 years old in the back seat at all times
- Never drink and drive
- Always use a designated driver
- Even if you are not drinking, always be alert to others on the road who may be driving irresponsibly

HOLIDAY TIPS

continued from page 9

Hosting a Responsible Holiday Party

- Have non-alcoholic beverages available for guests
- Serve light foods such as meats and cheeses to help retard the effects of alcohol
- Arrange for an official designated driver for your party
- Find alternate transportation for intoxicated guests or persuade them to spend the night
- Be responsible for your guests, even if it means taking their car keys

Holiday Travel Safety

During the holidays, take extra care in assuring your own security and that of your home.

Airline Travel

- Drink plenty of “water” to keep hydrated
- Avoid drinking alcohol on planes, as this increases dehydration
- Wear layers on plane rides so that you can regulate your own temperature
- Pay attention to the safety and evacuation presentation given by flight attendants
- Remember to take necessary medications (prescribed and over the counter)
- If prone to air or sea sickness take necessary precautions such as patches or Dramamine
- Keep photo identification with you at all times
- Do not pack completely wrapped presents in your luggage. This will make it more difficult to pass through security screeners

If Traveling with Children

- Make sure to keep them near you at all times
- Keep them in a child restraint system at all times during the flight
- Make sure they are seated away from the aisle where they could get hurt by passing people or carts
- Bring safe toys for them to play with

Securing Your Home When you are Away

- Get an automatic timer for your lights
- Ask a trusted neighbor to watch your home and pick up your mail and/or newspapers
- Do not display gifts where they can be seen from outside
- Take inventory of your home before you leave
- Make sure you have secure locks on your windows and doors.

Supervisor Antonovich Commemorates 50th Anniversary of Sheriff's Air Rescue 5 Program

In recognition of five decades of successful searches, evacuations of lost persons, countless law enforcement missions, and an impeccable safety record, Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich welcomed members of the Sheriff's Air Rescue 5 Program, which recently celebrated its 50th anniversary of providing life saving services to the citizens of Los Angeles County, to the Board of Supervisors meeting on November 1.



*Supervisor Antonovich presents a scroll to
Captain James Di Giovanna, Sheriff's Aero Bureau.*

“The Air Rescue 5 Program embodies Los Angeles County’s commitment to the safety and well-being of its citizens, and demonstrates the use of aircraft in outstanding public safety services,” the Supervisor said.

The program, based at Long Beach Municipal Airport, began in 1955 with a single Bell-47 helicopter. Currently, the program has three Sikorsky H-3 helicopters that are used in search and rescue operations.

The Air Rescue 5 Program provides some of the most advanced technical rescue capabilities available in the nation. Whether a technical rescue in the rugged San Gabriel Mountains, a swift water rescue in a raging flood control channel, or medical transport from Santa Catalina Island, the members of Air Rescue 5 proudly stand behind their motto, “Any mission. Anytime. Anywhere.”

Supervisor Knabe Declares National Family Caregiver Month

The Board of Supervisors declared November 2005 to be National Family Caregiver Month throughout the County of Los Angeles and commended nonprofit organizations, service providers, volunteers and staff for their support and participation in the program.

Supervisor Don Knabe made the declaration and presentation recently during a Board of Supervisors meeting. In attendance at the presentation was Cynthia Banks, the Interim Director of the Department of Community and Senior Services (DCSS), and Jenay Davis, (*center*) who is a DCSS employee, as well as a caregiver for her mother.

Family caregivers are those that provide care for a family member with a chronic illness or disability. This type of care goes above and beyond what a doctor, lawyer, or social worker can do for an individual. In the U.S. alone, approximately 65 million people, or 1/3 of the country's population, have provided some level of caregiving assistance to a family member during this last year. During the presentation, Supervisor Knabe praised family caregivers for the commitment they have for their loved ones.



"Family caregivers stand by those they love with unfailing dedication and commitment," Supervisor Knabe said. "With the holidays close by, I cannot think of a better time to say thanks to all of the family caregivers across Los Angeles County."

Supervisor Yaroslavsky Helps Kick Off Y!MBY



Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky helps kick off Project Y!MBY (Yes! In My Back Yard), a new targeted outreach campaign to provide housing, care and other vital services to the homeless population of Los Angeles and West Hollywood. The program was formally launched on "Homeless Connect Day," December 8 at Hollygrove, a Los Angeles-based non-profit children and family services center. The event was part of a national day of service sponsored by the federal Interagency Council on Homelessness, the County, the city of Los Angeles and the city of West Hollywood. The effort gathered service providers, including County and city agencies, to set up shop for one day in one location, to make it easier for the homeless to get the help and information they need to begin rebuilding their lives. Among

the services offered will be medical, educational, legal, jobs and housing.

Project Y!MBY Connect Day is the first stage of Project Y!MBY, a grass-roots initiative by the social-service agency PATH (People Assisting the Homeless) designed to help communities develop coordinated responses to homelessness that are specific to their areas.



Share It

Holiday Shopping Tips from the Department of Consumer Affairs



'Tis the season for shopping and giving to charity. It is also the time when the holiday spirit can cause us to overspend. These tips will help you avoid holiday problems and New Year budget blues.

Prepare a holiday budget and stick to it

Paying with cash can help keep your debts low. If you must pay by credit card, use just one. It makes it easier to keep track of your spending.

Know a store's refund policy before you buy


Some stores offer a full refund, some offer store credit only, and some may offer no refund at all.

Save your receipts! You'll need them for returns or exchanges.

Check your receipts

Check your receipt before you leave the cash register and make sure you have been charged the right price. If an item is on sale, make sure you're charged the sale price. When an item on sale is scanned, the regular price will be charged if the store has not changed the price in the scanner to the sale price.

Buying on the Internet

Before buying on the Internet, check that the website is secure. Look for a closed padlock symbol  in the lower right corner of your screen. If the website is secure, the address will begin with "https." The website address is located near the top of your screen. The "s" in "https" means the site is secure. Use a credit card. If there's a problem, paying by credit card lets you dispute charges with both the merchant and the credit card company. Sellers must deliver goods by the date promised when you placed your order. If they cannot do this, they must give you a refund or similar goods of equal or greater value. If you have problems with your Internet order, call us for help.

Gift Certificates

In California, gift certificates don't expire, no matter what the fine print says. Stores cannot charge you service fees for buying retailer gift cards and gift certificates. This means that when you pay for a \$20 gift certificate to company XYZ, they cannot charge you more than \$20.

Donating to charity

Be aware that many fraudulent charities use names that sound like the real charities. Don't be fooled. Give only to charities you know, like the American Red Cross and the United Way. It's a good idea to avoid charities that will not give you their name, a callback number, or written materials. Never give money to people who come to your home to pick up cash. Also be suspicious of out-of-state groups, especially if their only address is a post office box.

Guard against identity theft

Do not write your address, phone number, Social Security, or Driver License numbers on credit card receipts. Avoid giving personal information over the telephone or Internet unless you initiated the contact. Before giving personal information to any business, ask how it will be used and if it will remain confidential. Do not give your credit card number or financial information to people you don't know!

For more information, call (800) 593-8222, or visit us online at: lacountydca.info.



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